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When designing a classroom for students with autism, several essential factors must be considered. First, it is crucial to create a calm and organized environment. This environment can be achieved by using neutral colors, minimizing distractions, and providing transparent visual cues for different classroom areas. (Gantz, 2007)

Additionally, it is essential to have flexible seating options to accommodate different sensory needs. Some students with autism may benefit from having a designated quiet area or a sensory corner where they can go to regulate their sensory input. (Vogel, 2008)

Lighting is another important consideration. Natural lighting is generally preferred, but it is important to have adjustable lighting options to accommodate individual preferences. Some students may be sensitive to bright lights, while others may benefit from increased lighting.

Regarding furniture, it is essential to have comfortable and supportive seating options. Some students may benefit from having alternative seating options such as bean bags or exercise balls.

Lastly, it is essential to have visual schedules and clear routines to provide structure and predictability for students with autism. Visual schedules can help students understand the sequence of activities throughout the day and reduce anxiety. (Vogel, 2008)

These are just a few considerations when designing a classroom for students with autism. It is essential to consult with professionals and involve the input of parents and caregivers to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Creating a calm and organized classroom environment for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) involves considering various factors to accommodate their unique needs and

promote positive learning experiences. The ideal classroom will use visual aids like schedules, charts, and pictures to help students with ASD understand routines and expectations. Visual supports can reduce anxiety and increase predictability. Visual supports can be placed on the walls, boards, or the students' desks. (Vogel, 2008)

The classroom should be organized into clear, defined areas for different activities, such as reading corners, workstations, and sensory spaces. This organization helps students understand where they need to be and what to do. The classroom should be kept clutter-free and avoid unnecessary visual or auditory distractions. Soft, neutral colors should be used on the walls, limiting unnecessary decorations. (Vogel, 2008)

To consider the sensory needs of students with ASD, options for sensory breaks should be provided, and a sensory-friendly space where students can regulate themselves if needed should be created. The ideal classroom will offer various seating options, such as comfortable chairs, bean bags, and standing desks, to accommodate different sensory preferences and provide options for students who struggle with sitting for extended periods. (IRIS Center, 2023)

A quiet corner should be designated where students can retreat when overwhelmed or overstimulated. One should ensure this space is calming and has sensory tools like noise-canceling headphones or fidget toys. Whenever possible, utilize natural lighting as it can positively impact students' overall mood and focus. The use of visual markers or rugs to help students understand personal space and designated areas for specific activities should be utilized. In the ideal classroom, verbal, written, and visual cues reinforce understanding and help students process information. One should establish a predictable daily routine and stick to it as much as possible. Students with ASD often thrive in structured environments. A communication system

that supports non-verbal students, such as picture cards or communication devices, should be implemented to facilitate expression and understanding. (IRIS, 2023)

One should include areas that promote social interaction but ensure they are designed to be non-threatening and comfortable for students who struggle with social interactions. (Vogel, 2023)

Students should have their own space. One should provide dedicated storage areas or cubbies for students to keep their belongings, reducing anxiety and promoting organization. In the ideal classroom, one should create a system for positive reinforcement, using visuals or token economies to encourage and recognize good behavior and achievements. (Crosland & Dunlap, 2012)

When designing a classroom for students with autism, several essential factors must be considered and utilized to create the ideal classroom environment for students with ASD to perform at their best.

## Resources

California Diagnostic Centers. (2011). *Autism Program Environment Rating Scale*

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